



## RMC Legislative Committee Meeting Minutes

Date - February 7, 2022

Time - 2:00 pm to 3:00 pm

Type: Zoom Teleconference

Participants: Lindsay Thompson, John Hartline, Steve McHenry, Alice Settle-Raskin, Beth Hill, Cassie Shirk, Matt Tefteau, Monique Snyder, Chris Benzing, Josh Hastings, Don Mulrine, Cassandra Vanhooser, Scott Warner, Greg Padgham, Bill Christopher, Kimberly Kratovil, Amanda Clevenger, Debbie Bowden, Senator Addie Eckardt, Grayson Middleton, Andrew Cassilly, Susan O'Neill, Dianna-Lynne Hsu, Steve McHenry, Charlotte Davis, Dakota Matthews, Megan D'Arcy.

- I. Welcome and Introductions: Co-chair Lindsay Thompson welcomed everyone, conducted roll call, and called the meeting to order at 2:02pm.
- II. Review of January 31, 2022 Meeting Minutes: Co-chair Lindsay Thompson asked for a motion to accept the minutes. Mr. Don Mulrine made the motion to approve the 1/31/2022 minutes. Ms. Susan Harrison seconded it. There were no objections. The minutes for 1/31/2022 were unanimously approved.
- III. 2022 Bill Tracking: Co-Chair Lindsay Thompson stated that due to the amount of bills to review, she will read the consensus to support, oppose, or monitor and then ask for opposition for the position.
  - a. SB473/HB730: Economic Development - Maryland E-Innovation Initiative Program - Qualifying Donations, Senate - 2/16 - 1:00 - Budget and Taxation. Co-Chair Thompson stated that that this bill makes it easier for smaller institutions like Frostburg, St. Mary's College and UMES to qualify for the E-Innovation program and the match will be \$200,000 instead of \$500,000 and that the bill is coming out of the Task Force for Western Maryland. Co-Chair Lindsay Thompson asked if there was any opposition. There was none. The Committee supports the SB473/HB730. *Status – Support.*
  - b. SB476/HB550: Alcoholic Beverages - Manufacturer's Licenses and Off-Site Permits - Sunset Extension, Senate - First Reading - Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs. The Committee supported this bill in 2021 and this bill extends the delivery for one year. Co-Chair Lindsay Thompson asked if there was any opposition. There was none. The Committee supports the SB476/HB550. *Status – Support.*
  - c. SB528: Climate Solutions Now Act of 2022, Senate - 2/15 at 1:00 - (Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs). Co-Chair Lindsay Thompson stated the Committee monitored the bill last year and asked if there was any opposition to monitor the bill this year. There was none. The Committee will monitor the SB528. *Status – Monitor.*
  - d. SB567: Property Tax - Agricultural Use Assessment – Improvements, Senate - 2/16 - 1:00 - Budget and Taxation. Co-Chair Lindsay Thompson stated that this bill alters the definition for agriculture land for the purpose of the agricultural use assessment to include value added agricultural products, alcohol, and tourism. Co-Chair Lindsay Thompson asked if there was any opposition. There was none. The Committee supports the SB567. *Status – Support.*

- e. SB603/HB506: Constitutional Amendment – Beer and Wine Licenses – Retail Grocery Establishments, Senate - First Reading - Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs. The Committee decided to remove SB603/HB506 from the tracker. *Status – Remove From Tracker.*
- f. SB622: Income Tax - Credit for Travel, Hospitality, and Entertainment, Senate - 2/23 - 1:00 - Budget and Taxation. Ms. Charlotte Davis stated that this is a tax credit for people to visit areas around the state for tourism reasons. Ms. Cassandra Vanhooser stated that this would be good for tourism in Maryland. Co-Chair Lindsay Thompson asked if there was any opposition. There was none. The Committee supports the SB622 bill. *Status – Support.*
- g. SB626: Maryland Loan Assistance Repayment Program for Physicians and Physician Assistants – Alterations, Senate - 2/17 - 1:00 - Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs. Ms. Charlotte Davis stated that this bill is incentivizing part-time Physician Assistants to be eligible for the Maryland Loan Assistance Repayment program. Co-Chair Lindsay Thompson asked if there was any opposition. There was none. The Committee supports the SB626. *Status – Support.*
- h. SB640: Primary and Secondary Education - Maintenance of Effort Requirements – Alterations, Senate - First Reading - Budget and Taxation. The Committee requested more information on this bill and Ms. Charlotte Davis stated that she will reach out to MACo. SB640 was placed on hold. *Status - On hold.*
- i. SB675: Property and Income Taxes – Credits for Construction and Purchase of Housing in Western Maryland, Senate - First Reading Budget and Taxation. The Committee will monitor the bill since it is a regional bill and not statewide. *Status - Monitor*
- j. SB696: Maryland Loan Assistance Repayment for Nurses and Nursing Workers – Program Establishment and Funding, Senate - First Reading Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs and Budget and Taxation. Co-Chair Lindsay Thompson said this was a similar bill to SB626 and the Committee decided to wait to discuss since the bill text is not available. *Status - On hold.*
- k. HB456: Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program - State Supplement, House - 2/08 - 1:00 – Appropriations. Ms. Charlotte Davis stated that this bill increases the supplement and decrease the age limit. She further stated that by increasing eligibility and the amount could potentially impact Maryland Farmers. Co-chair Lindsay Thompson asked if there was any opposition to submitting a letter to the Committee Chair since the submission deadline has passed. There was none. The Committee supports HB456 and will submit a letter to the Committee Chair. *Status – Support.*
- l. HB562: Consumer Protection - Right to Repair - Farm Equipment, House - 2/23 - 1:00 - Economic Matters. The Committee discussed the bill stating that it will authorize third party repair and will essentially make the right to repair farm equipment similar to repairing a vehicle. Co-Chair Lindsay Thompson asked if there was any opposition. There was none. The Committee supports the bill. *Status – Support.*
- m. HB570: Pesticides – Mosquito Control Products and PFAS Chemicals, House - First Reading - Health and Government Operations. The Committee discussed the bill and Co-Chair Lindsay Thompson asked if there was any opposition to a tentative opposition and check in with MACo. There was none. The Committee tentatively opposes HB570 and will check with MACo. *Status – On hold.*

- n. HB623: Income Tax - Subtraction Modification - Essential Health Care Workers, House - 2/16 - 1:00 - Ways and Means. Ms. Charlotte Davis stated this bill incentives more people to work in the health care field and the Committee should support it. Co-Chair Lindsay Thompson asked if there was any opposition. There was none. The Committee supports the HB623. *Status – Support.*
- o. HB695/SB522: Environment – Climate Crisis Plan – Requirement (Better Together to Save Our Weather Act of 2022), House - Environment – Climate Crisis Plan – Requirement (Better Together to Save Our Weather Act of 2022). Ms. Charlotte Davis stated that this bill requires all the counties to file a crisis management plan with MDE on their climate crisis management and suggested that she check with MACo. The Committee decided to defer HB695/SB522 until they check with MACo. *Status: On Hold*
- p. HB709/SB632: Maryland Health Benefit Exchange - Small Business and Nonprofit Health Insurance Subsidies Program, House - Hearing 2/17 - 1:30- Health and Government Operations. The Committee discussed the existing small group reform and the concern of eroding that program so the Committee would like more information to ensure it does not erode the risk pool. Co-Chair Lindsay Thompson made the recommendation to draft the letter of support and double check with the bill sponsor to see if there are any conflicts. *Status – On Hold*
- q. HB727/SB541: Natural Resources - Maryland Park Service and State Parks - Alterations (Great Maryland Outdoors Act), House - 2/23 - 1:00 - (Environment and Transportation) , Appropriations. Ms. Charlotte Davis stated that Program Open Space did not take a position because it is fencing certain funding and while the agricultural programs benefit, there is impact to stateside funding that is a concern. Ms. Davis asked that the bill be deferred until the next meeting. *Status - On Hold.*
- r. HB784: Department of Natural Resources - Irreplaceable Natural Areas Program – Establishment, House - 2/23 - 1:00 - Environment and Transportation. The Committee recommended that not to take a position but to monitor the bill to ensure the Committee monitors to ensure it does not impact county, local, and open space. *Status - Monitor.*
- s. HB787: Retiree Income Tax Relief Act of 2022, House - 2/23 - 1:00 -Ways and Means. Co-Chair Lindsay Thompson asked that we defer the bill until next week since the hearing isn't until February 23, 2022 to understand the multiple bills that relate to this subject. *Status – On Hold.*
- t. HB798: Community Healthy Air Act, House - 2/23 - 1:00 - Environment and Transportation. The Committee decided to monitor the bill. *Status: Monitor.*
- u. HB801: Natural Gas - Strategic Infrastructure Development and Enhancement - Surcharge and Plans (STRIDE Act of 2022), House - Hearing 2/24 - 1:00 - Economic Matters. *Status - Monitor see cross file below.*
- v. HB806: Building Standards and Emissions Reductions – High Performance, State, and Local Government Buildings, State Operations, and Eligible Projects, House - First Reading – Appropriations. The Committee discussed the bill and Ms. Beth Hill stated that she will review and circle back and once she speaks to Mr. Dan Rider. Co-chair Lindsay Thompson stated this is priority for Delegate Barve. *Status - On Hold.*
- w. HB831: Reducing Greenhouse Gas Emissions - Commercial and Residential Buildings, House - 2/25 - 11:00 - Environment and Transportation. Co-chair Lindsay Thompson

stated that this is essentially a companion bill to HB806 and that the Committee should defer the bill until we hear back from the forestry industry. *Status - On Hold.*

- x. HB834: On–Site Sewage Disposal Systems – Outreach and Education (Septic Awareness Act of 2022), House -2/25 - 11:00 - Environment and Transportation. Ms. Charlotte Davis stated that this is coming out of the federal government, and it creates Septic Awareness Week. Ms. Susan Harrison stated that Extension has education materials on septic systems and maintenance. The Committee decided to monitor the bill. *Status - Monitor.*

On Hold From 1/31/2022 meeting:

- SB394/HB408: Statewide Targeted Overdose Prevention (STOP) Act of 2022, Senate - 2/17 - 1:00 – Finance/ House - First Reading - Health and Government Operations. The Committee discussed the bill and decided to monitor it. *Status – Monitor.*
- SB398/HB421: Out–of–State Health Care Practitioners – Provision of Behavioral Health Services via Telehealth – Authorization, Senate - First Reading Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs/ House - 2/10 - 1:30 - Health and Government Operations. Ms. Charlotte Davis stated that this creates a compact that will ensure out-of-state health practitioners have the credentials and scope of practice that Maryland recognizes. Ms. Davis stated that the Maryland Health Care Commission is conducting a study on telehealth and it while this bill might be premature it theoretically will improve access to telehealth by having these out-of-state practioners available. Mr. Mulrine made a motion to support the legislation Co-chair Chris Benzing seconded it. There was no opposition. The motion to support SB398/HB421 the bill was unanimously approved. *Status - Support*
- SB405/HB420: Retirement Tax Elimination Act of 2022, Senate - First Reading - Budget and Taxation/ House - 2/23 - 1:00 - Ways and Means. Co-chair Lindsay Thompson stated that this is an Administration bill and Mr. Don Mulrine made the motion to support the bill. Co-chair Chris Benzing seconded it. There was no opposition. The motion to support SB405/HB420 the bill was unanimously approved. *Status - Support*
- SB423/HB801: Natural Gas - Strategic Infrastructure Development and Enhancement - Surcharge and Plans (STRIDE Act of 2022), Senate - 2/15 - 1:00 – Finance. Ms. Charlotte Davis stated that in terms of infrastructure development across rural areas, natural gas or heating for low-income housing but most of the bills are moving away from natural to renewable energy. The Committee decided to monitor the bill. *Status - Monitor*
- SB474: Economic Development - Western Maryland Economic Future Investment Board and Fund – Establishment, Senate - 2/15 - 1:00 - Budget and Taxation. Ms. Charlotte Davis stated that this bill is regional in its focus and there was a question last week on whether or not it could be amended to be a statewide program. The Committee decided to monitor the bill because as a general rule the Committee takes position on statewide bills. *Status - Monitor*
- SB518: Career Pathways for Health Care Workers Program, Senate - First Reading – Finance. Davis stated that these are \$50,000 grants to provide training. Creating a grant program at the HBCUs to offer health care training given the lack of provider and shortages of health care workers for \$50,000 grants. The Committee decided to monitor the bill because it may be duplicative to other programs available such as EARN and workforce investment monies that could be used to set up a similar program, plus the Governor is putting in additional

monies to the hospitals and nursing homes to supplant training programs in house. *Status - Monitor*

- IV. Other: Co-chair Lindsay Thompson asked if there were any additional bills to be discussed and there was none.
  - a. Virtual Rural Maryland Day – Thursday, February 10, 2022, 8:30am to 12:30pm: Ms. Charlotte Davis provided an update on the day that included over 100 participants meeting with 38 legislator appointments and reviewed the agenda for the event.
    - i. 2022 Talking Points and Materials
- V. Adjourn: Co-chair Lindsay Thompson adjourned the meeting at 2:50pm.

**Next Meeting: Monday, February 14, 2022, 2pm-3pm, Zoom Teleconference**